



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
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SFWG Minutes 01/15/2009

School Facilities Working Group
January 15, 2009

Members Present

Ron Spangler, School Committee, Chair
Kathleen Bodie, Superintendent
Brian Sullivan, Town Manager
Allan Tosti, Finance Committee
Clarissa Rowe, Board of Selectmen
Charlie Foscett, Capital Planning Committee
Bill Shea, Permanent Town Building Committee
Michael Ruderman, Town Meeting, Thompson
Michael Healy, Town Meeting, Stratton

Also Present

Sue Mazzeella, CFO, Arlington Public Schools
Sheri Donovan, Principal, Thompson
Alan Brown, Principal, Stratton
Jackie Daley, Paul Morrison, Bill Grubb, Gary Kane - Stratton School Council
Mary Wisniewski, Tom Robertson, Angela Alton, Liz DiNolfo, Jo Anne Preston - Thompson Rebuild and Equity Task Force

The meeting was called to order at 5:36 PM

1. Introductions and Meeting Objectives

All attendees were invited to sit at the table to facilitate communication. Mr. Spangler explained that the purpose of the meeting was to introduce the Stratton and Thompson advocacy groups to the SFWG, to share new information, and to determine what, if any, warrant articles should be filed for the 2009 Town Meeting.

2. Updates

- MSBA: Mr. Spangler said he had spoken to Arlington's new point of contact at MSBA, Diane Sullivan, who confirmed that MSBA has no specific timeline for making decisions about the second round of SOIs submitted in November 2008.
- Federal stimulus: Mr. Sullivan explained that Arlington had responded to a request from the Lt. Governor's office with a set of "shovel-ready" projects, for the anticipated Federal Stimulus package, including rebuilding Thompson and renovating Stratton.
- Capital planning: Mr. Foscett said the Capital Planning Committee wishes to continue funding the annual \$270K increment of non-exempt capital funds for Stratton and Thompson, but that his committee asked the school department not to spend these funds, including a freeze on FY09 spending, until there has been an engineering assessment of the facility needs at both schools. Ms. Mazzeella proposed engaging On-Site Insight to do that work, and will coordinate with Mr. Shea of PTBC. Principal Brown agreed with the freeze but said Stratton has been spending the capital funds wisely. Ms. Wisniewski said the freeze is disappointing, but understandable. Still she worried about entering another waiting pattern. Mr. Foscett said we should expect between 6 months and one year of planning, and that big spending decisions require a solid plan.
- Crosby & Parmenter: Ms. Rowe said that the proposed Selectman's Advisory Committee on Crosby and Parmenter has not been formed yet. The Board is waiting for the results of the valuation study. The RFP is in

preparation. The Board would also like to resolve the question of whether the school department sees potential future need for space in either building.

Other discussion followed. Ms. Preston said demographics would be hard to get right in a recession. Ms. Rowe asked about the facilities master plan, and said we need a fast plan for Stratton and Thompson and a roadmap for other schools, but this is a School Committee decision.

The Thompson Task Force told the meeting that Senator Donnelly and other officials will be visiting their school soon to inspect the facility. They expressed their hope for a complete rebuild or a bare-bones renovation.

3. Warrant Articles

Mr. Sullivan said there would be "stimulus package" articles on the warrant of the Special Town Meeting scheduled for April 27th. Appropriations by the STM can be spent quickly, in keeping with the spirit of the proposed federal stimulus. Ms. Rowe said there might be a ten registered voters article to transfer ownership of the land around the schools to the Town.

4. Next Meeting

The next meeting was tentatively set for March 4th at 7pm.

5. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 pm.

Submitted by:

Ron Spangler, Chair
May 8, 2009

Approved by SFWG on May 7, 2009